Amendments to the Specification:

Please amend the paragraph on page 5, line 9 through line 26 as follows:

In another embodiment, the present invention provides an analytical method comprising determining whether or not a nuclear magnetic resonance spectrum taken from a sample of dichloroacetic acid includes a nuclear magnetic resonance peak associated with a CH proton of chloral hydrate, further comprising:

adding at least one organic solvent to said sample; and

comparing an integral of said nuclear magnetic resonance peak associated with said CH proton of chloral hydrate with an integral of a nuclear magnetic resonance peak associated with at least one proton of said at least one organic solvent. In certain preferred embodiments, the organic solvent is toluene. In certain preferred embodiments, the method further comprises calculating a concentration of chloral hydrate in said dichloroacetic acid based upon said comparison of integrals of nuclear magnetic resonance peaks. In certain preferred embodiments, the calculated concentration of chloral hydrate is less than 15 ppm. In certain preferred embodiments, the calculated concentration of chloral hydrate is less than 10 ppm. In certain preferred embodiments, the calculated concentration of chloral hydrate is less than 1 ppm. In certain preferred embodiments, the dichloroacetic acid is used as a deprotecting agent in an oligonucleotide synthesis to prepare an oligonucleotide having the formula:

d(TpCpCpGpTpCpApTpCpGpCpTpCpCpTpCpApGpGpGp) [SEQ ID NO: 1]; wherein $P = P(O)S^{-}\,Na^{+}$.

Please amend the paragraph on page 11, line 20 through line 23 as follows:

In certain preferred embodiments, the oligonucleotide prepared using dichloroacetic acid as a deprotecting agent that has been tested according to the methods of the present invention has the formula:

d(TpCpCpGpTpCpApTpCpGpCpTpCpCpTpCpApGpGpGp) [SEQ ID NO: 1]; wherein $P = P(O)S^{-}\,Na^{+}$.

Please amend the following on page 15, line 7 through line 9 as follows:

Example 2

Preparation of (d(TpCpCpGpTpCpApTpCpGpCpTpCpCpTpCpApGpGpGp) [SEQ ID NO:1]**; wherein** $\mathbf{P = P(O)S^- Na^+}$.